

RESPONSE

Claims Status

Claims 1-31 were originally filed in this application and were pending for examination. In the current Action, claims 1-3, 6-13, 16-23, 26-31 were rejected, and claims 4, 5, 14, 15, 24 and 25 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit this Amendment and Response, after which claims 1,2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-34 will be pending in this application, with claims 1, 11, 21, and 31-34 as independent claims.

Claim Objections

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4, 5, 14, 15, 24 and 25 is noted with appreciation. Applicants have redrafted claims 4, 5, 14, 15, 24 and 25 in independent form, incorporating the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and added similar limitations to claim 31, and therefore submit that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

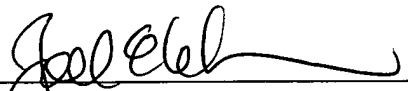
CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the application and claims in light of this Response, and respectfully submit claims 1,2, 6-12, 16-22, and 26-34 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, in his review of this Response or after further examination, a telephonic interview would expedite the favorable prosecution of the present application, the Applicants' attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues, and to work with the Examiner toward placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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